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THE HANDS OF SHANG-CHI, MASTER OF KUNG FU

SHANG-CHI FACES ELECTRONIC DEATH
AT THE HANDS OF
SHOCKWAVE!



BUCKLER

**MARTIAL ARTS
MAYHEM!**
IN THE MADCAP MARVEL MANNER!

"Call me Shang-Chi, as my **father** did, when he raised me and molded my mind and my body in the vacuum of his Honan, China retreat. I learned many things from my father. Since then, I have learned that my father is **Dr. Fu Manchu**, the most insidiously evil man on earth...and that to **honor** him would bring nothing but **dishonor** to the spirit of my **name**.

Stan Lee PRESENTS: MASTER OF KUNG FU!™

Featuring supporting characters created by SAX ROHMER

A FLASH of PURPLE SPARKS

"**SHOCK-WAVE**: A MAN EMBITTERED BY THE LOSS OF HIS POSITION WITHIN SMITH'S EMPLOY, A MAN WHO HAS FLED TO A NEW IDENTITY IN A CIRCUS TOURING THE ORIENT, WHO HAS STUDIED THE MARTIAL ARTS, AND HAS ADDED THE ALIEN FORCE OF ELECTRICITY TO HIS SKILLS--A MAN WHO NOW SEEKS VENGEANCE ON SMITH BY MURDERING FORMER FRIENDS AND ASSOCIATES WITHIN SMITH'S AGENCY...

"I HAVE CONFRONTED THIS MAN, AND SUFFERED GREAT PAIN UNDER THE SPARKS OF HIS FALSE HANDS. I WILL CONFRONT HIM AGAIN..."

DOLG MOENCH & PAUL GULACY
WRITER / ARTIST

JACK ABEL
INKER
PETRA G.
COLORIST

GASPAR
LETTERER
MARV WOLFMAN
EDITOR

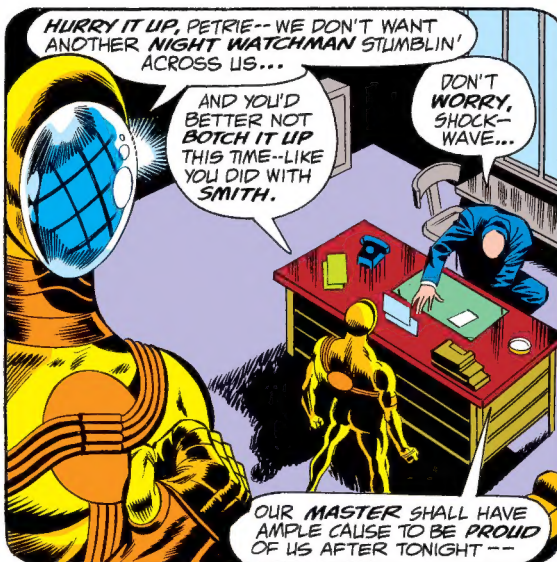


"...AND THE OUTCOME
WILL EFFECT MORE
LIVES THAN MY OWN."



PETRIE! WHERE THE DEVIL HAVE YOU BEEN, MAN? I'VE HAD MISS GREVILLE TRYING TO REACH YOU FOR THE PAST TWO DAYS!

SORRY, NAYLAND, BUT I'VE BEEN TO MY PHYSICIAN-- KIDNEY TROUBLES, YOU KNOW...

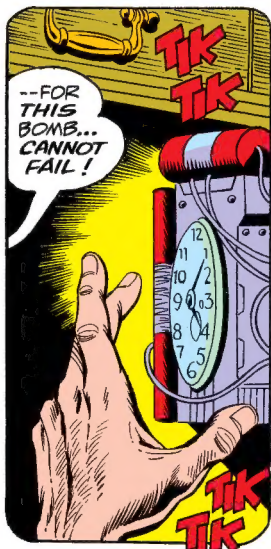


HURRY IT UP, PETRIE-- WE DON'T WANT ANOTHER NIGHT WATCHMAN STUMBLIN' ACROSS US...

AND YOU'D BETTER NOT BOTCH IT UP THIS TIME--LIKE YOU DID WITH SMITH.

DON'T WORRY, SHOCK-WAVE...

OUR MASTER SHALL HAVE AMPLE CAUSE TO BE PROUD OF US AFTER TONIGHT --



--FOR THIS BOMB... CANNOT FAIL!

TK TK

TK TK



OH? ACTING UP AGAIN, PETRIE? I HOPE IT'S NOTHING SERIOUS...

NO, NOTHING TOO BAD, NAYLAND! AS A MATTER OF FACT, MY PHYSICIAN CLEARED MATTERS UP QUITE NICELY...

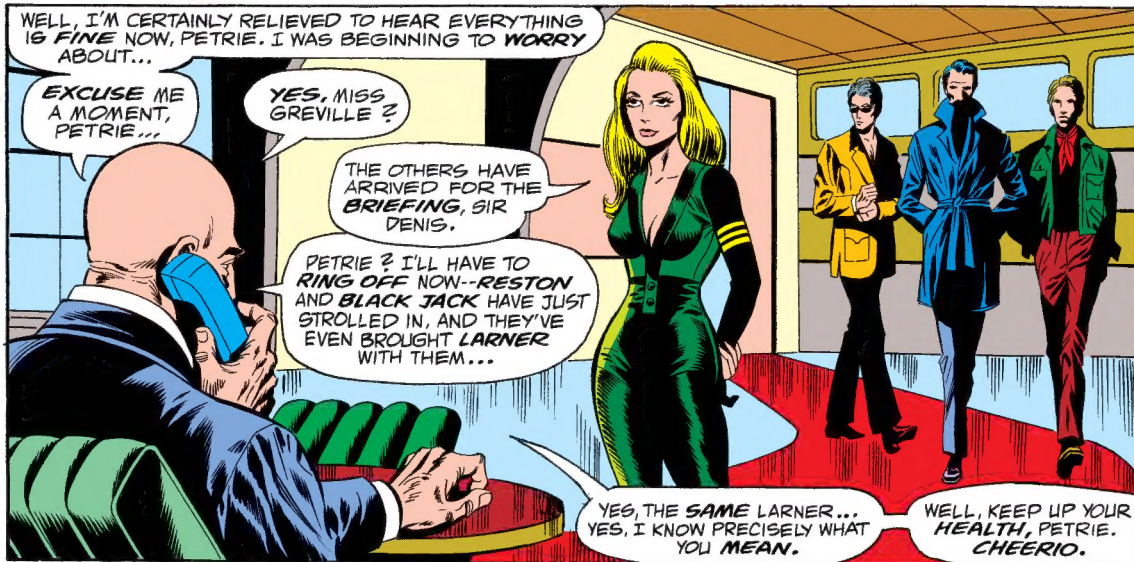
...AND I WAS ABLE TO SPEND LAST NIGHT WITH A FRIEND!



WELL, NOW THAT WE'RE SURE MR. BLACK JACK TARR WILL GET A BANG OUT OF OUR NIGHT'S WORK--

--LET'S GET OUT OF HERE, PETRIE

THIS WATCHMAN IS A BLOODY DEAD-WEIGHT AROUND OUR NECKS--IF IT HADN'T BEEN SUCH A PLEASURE, I'D ALMOST WISH I HADN'T ZAPPED 'IM OUT!



WELL, I'M CERTAINLY RELIEVED TO HEAR EVERYTHING IS FINE NOW, PETRIE. I WAS BEGINNING TO WORRY ABOUT...

EXCUSE ME A MOMENT, PETRIE...

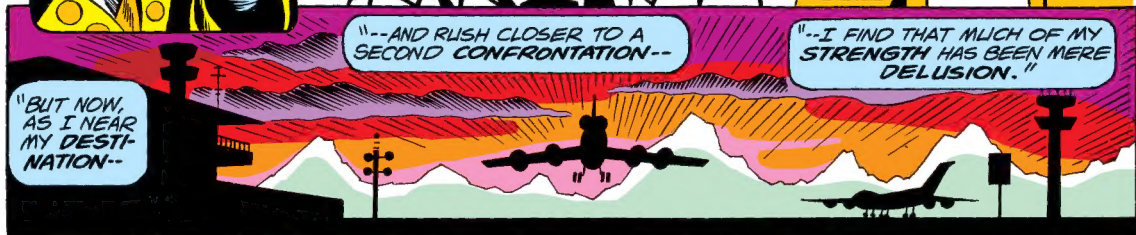
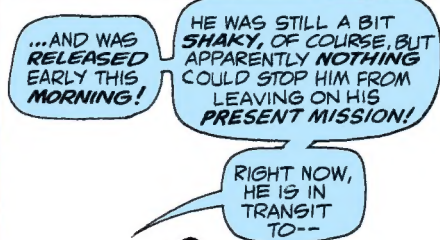
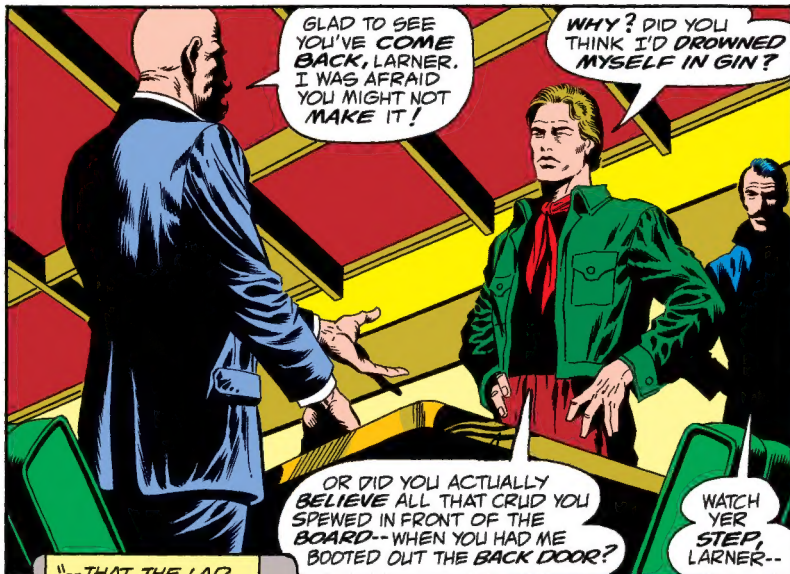
YES, MISS GREVILLE?

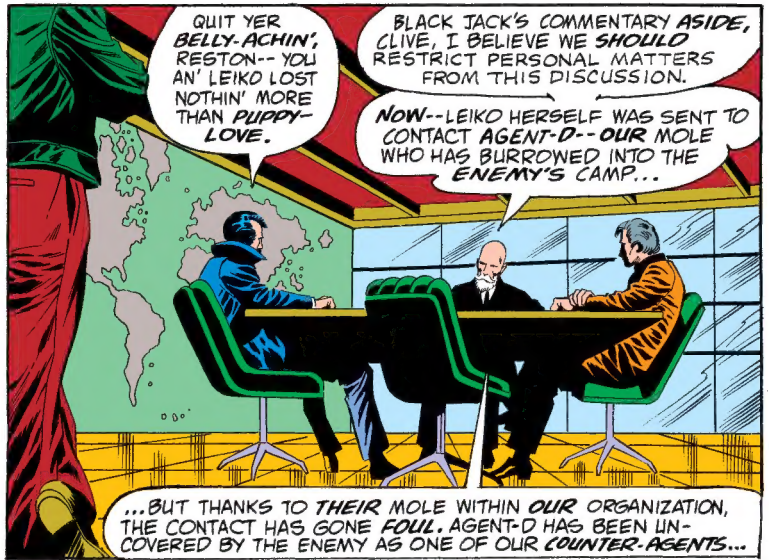
THE OTHERS HAVE ARRIVED FOR THE BRIEFING, SIR DENIS.

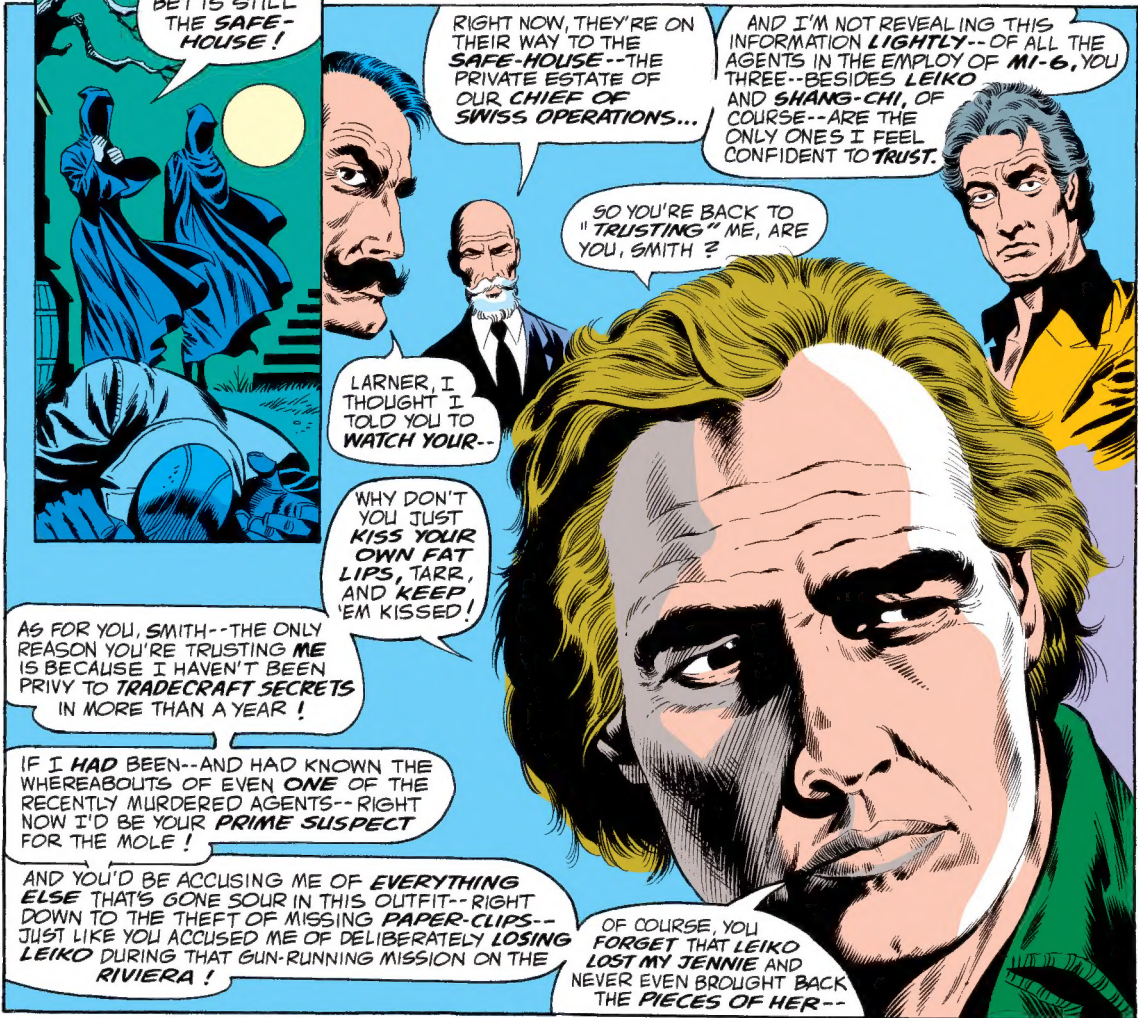
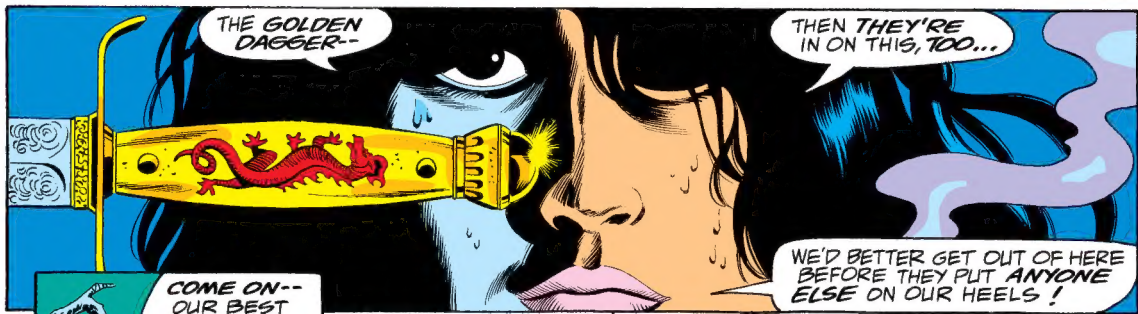
PETRIE? I'LL HAVE TO RING OFF NOW--RESTON AND BLACK JACK HAVE JUST STROLLED IN, AND THEY'VE EVEN BROUGHT LARNER WITH THEM...

YES, THE SAME LARNER... YES, I KNOW PRECISELY WHAT YOU MEAN.

WELL, KEEP UP YOUR HEALTH, PETRIE. CHEERIO.

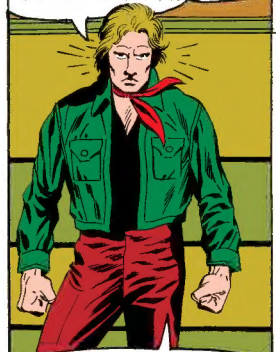




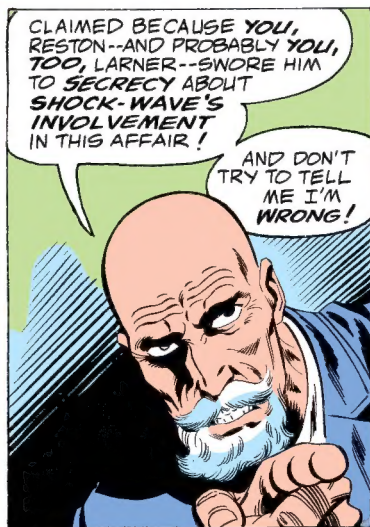
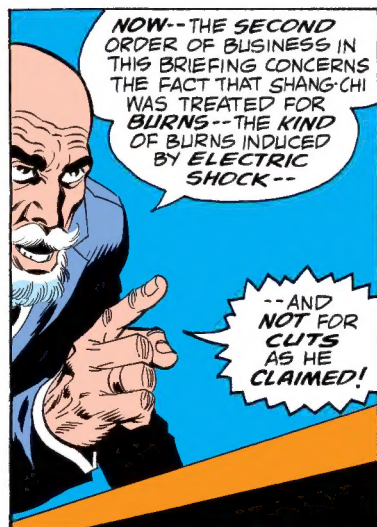
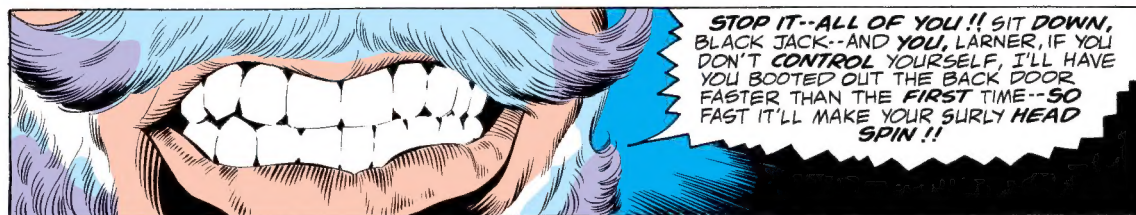




I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR THAT, TARR--WAITING TO GET THIS THING OUT IN OPEN WHERE I CAN DEAL WITH IT.



OF COURSE, I WAS HOPING SMITH WOULD TAKE A POKE AT ME, BUT YOU'VE BEEN SNIFFING SMITH'S SEAT FOR SO LONG THAT YOU'RE BEGINNING TO SMELL JUST LIKE HIM--



DON'T BE **ABSDUR**, CLIVE! DID YOU HONESTLY BELIEVE I WOULDN'T EVEN **GLANCE** AT THE PHYSICIAN'S REPORT?



AND DID YOU HONESTLY BELIEVE I WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO **IDENTIFY** SHOCK-WAVE FROM BLACK JACK'S ACCOUNT OF WHAT HAPPENED AT **ORIENTAL EXPEDITERS**--?



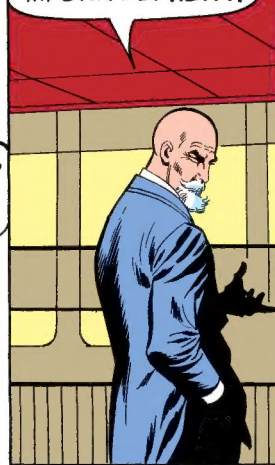
--FROM HIS **DESCRIPTION** OF SHANG-CHI'S ASSAILANT?

BLACK JACK WASN'T **AROUND** WHEN LAN-CASTER SNEED META-MORPHOSED INTO THE MADMAN CALLED **SHOCK-WAVE**--



--NOR WAS I, FOR THAT MATTER...

...BUT DID YOU ACTUALLY **ASSUME** I WOULD NOT KEEP UP TO DATE WITH THE DOSSIER ON MY OWN NEPHEW?!



BUT THAT'S PRECISELY WHY WE **DIDN'T** TELL YOU--BECAUSE SNEED IS YOUR NEPHEW!

FOR GOD'S SAKE, SMITH-- WHY SHOULD WE DRAG YOU OVER THE COALS UNTIL WE WERE ABSOLUTELY CERTAIN IT **WAS** HIM?



BECAUSE IT'S YOUR **SWORN DUTY** TO REPORT **EVERYTHING** TO ME-- WHETHER **YOU** FEEL IT IS GERMANE OR NOT!

I OUGHT TO LUMP THE **BOTH** OF YOU IN WITH **SECURITY BRANCH**!

THEIR HEADS ARE **ALREADY** ON THE CHOPPING BLOCK. HOW **ANYONE** COULD PLANT A BOMB RIGHT **UNDER** MY DESK WITHOUT **THEIR** **KNOWLEDGE**...!



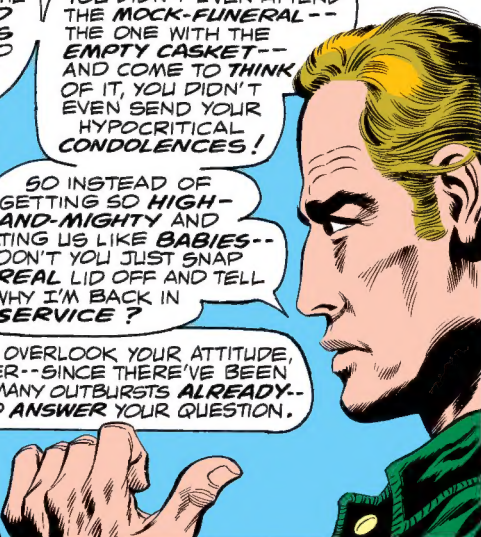
ALL RIGHT, SMITH, SO ME AND REGON ARE **BAD LITTLE SCHOOLBOYS** BECAUSE WE TRIED TO SPARE YOU A LITTLE **PSYCHOLOGICAL PAIN**-- WHICH IS MORE THAN **YOU** DID FOR ME WHEN LEIKO LOST MY **JENNIE**!

YOU DIDN'T EVEN ATTEND THE **MOCK-FUNERAL**-- THE ONE WITH THE **EMPTY CASKET**-- AND COME TO **THINK** OF IT, YOU DIDN'T EVEN SEND YOUR **HYPOCRITICAL CONDOLENCES**!

SO INSTEAD OF GETTING SO **HIGH-AND-MIGHTY** AND TREATING US LIKE **BABIES**-- WHY DON'T YOU JUST SNAP THE **REAL** LID OFF AND TELL ME WHY I'M BACK IN **SERVICE**?

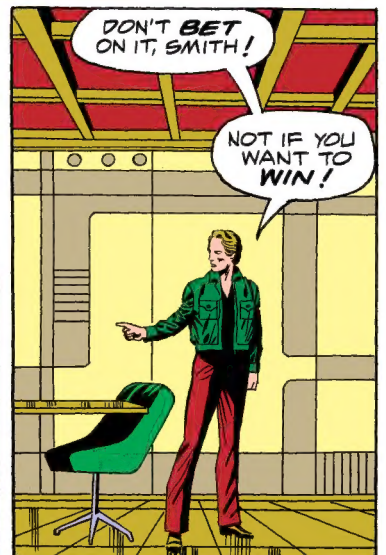
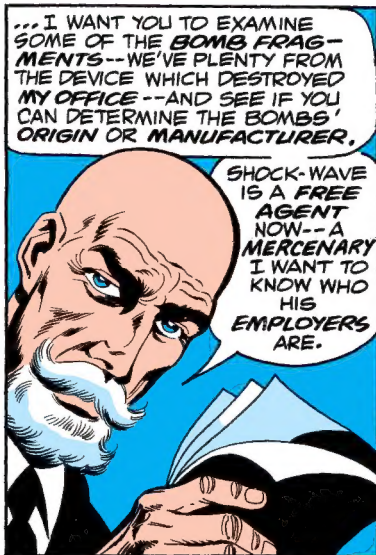
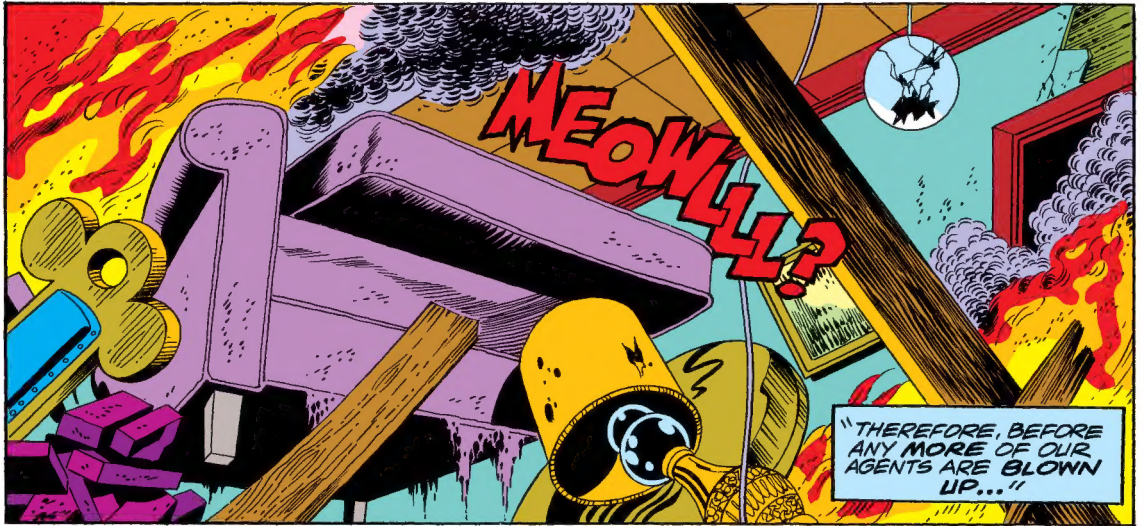
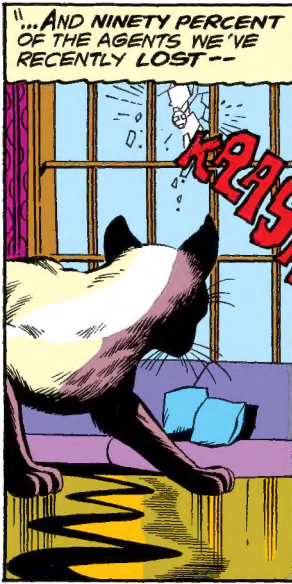
I'LL OVERLOOK YOUR ATTITUDE, LARNER--SINCE THERE'VE BEEN TOO MANY **OUTBURSTS** **ALREADY**-- AND **ANSWER** YOUR QUESTION.

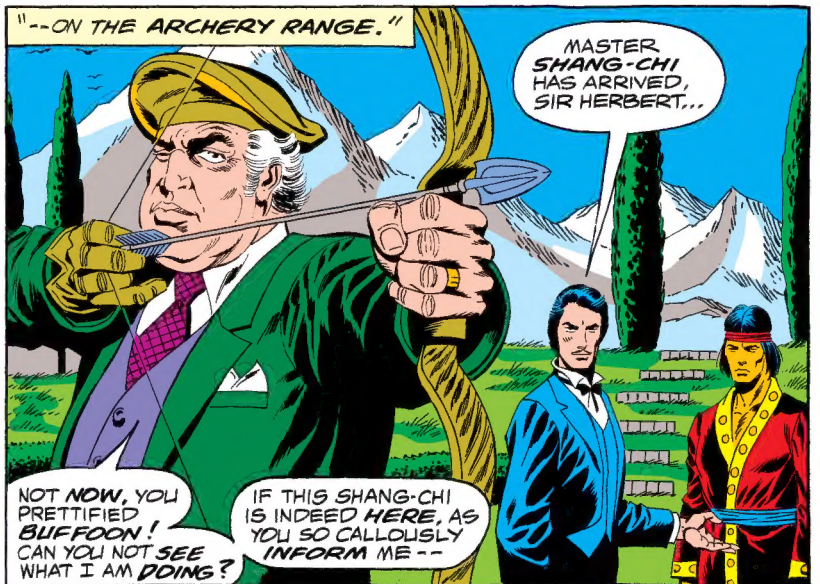
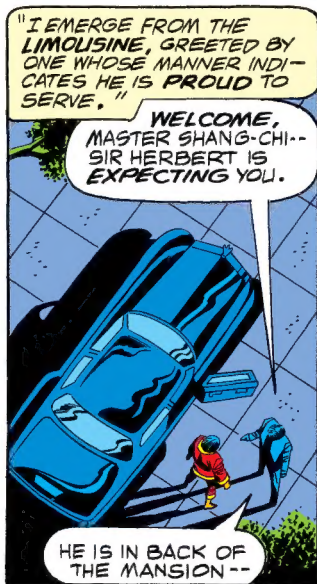
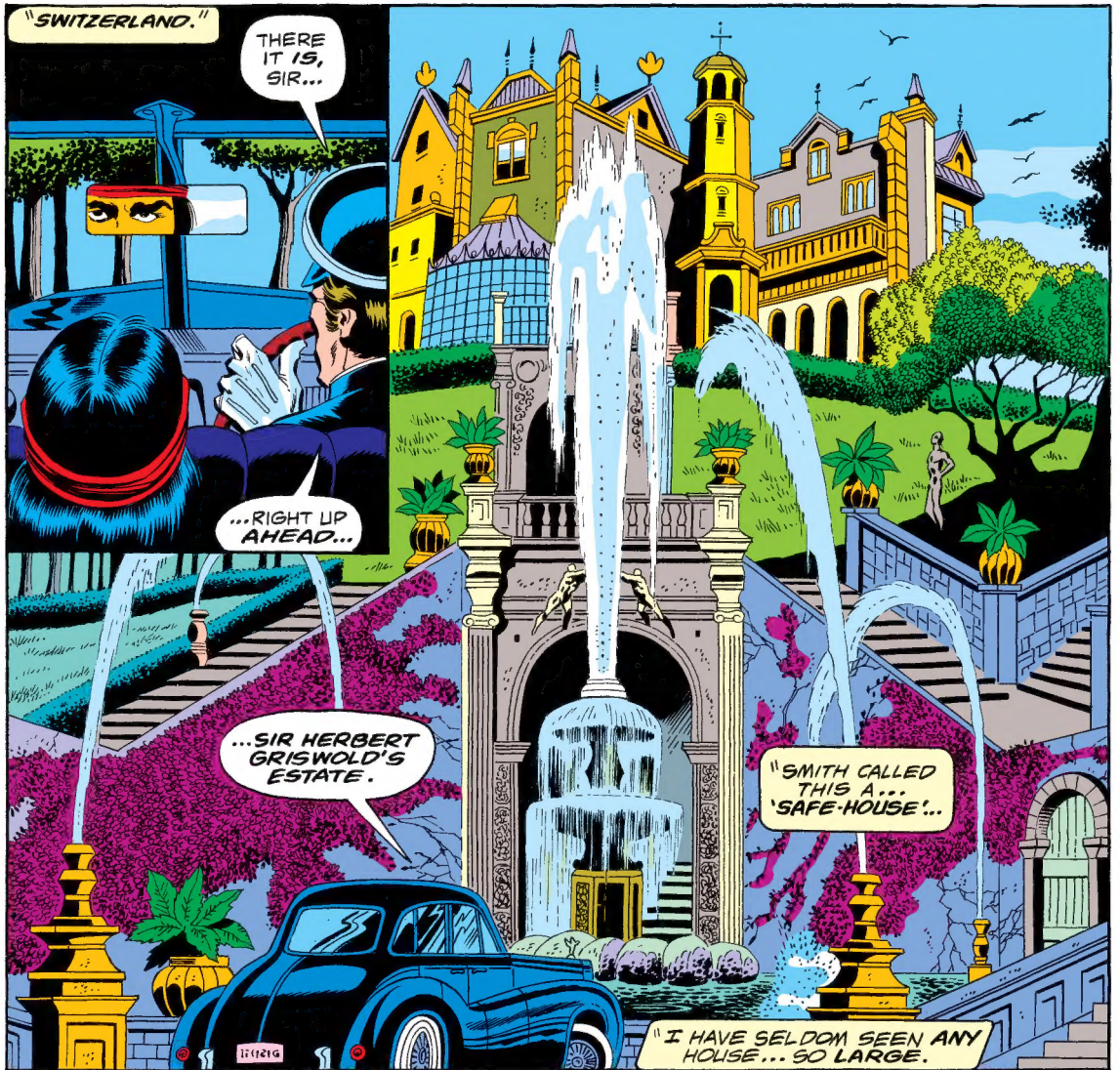
THE REASON IS **SIMPLE**.

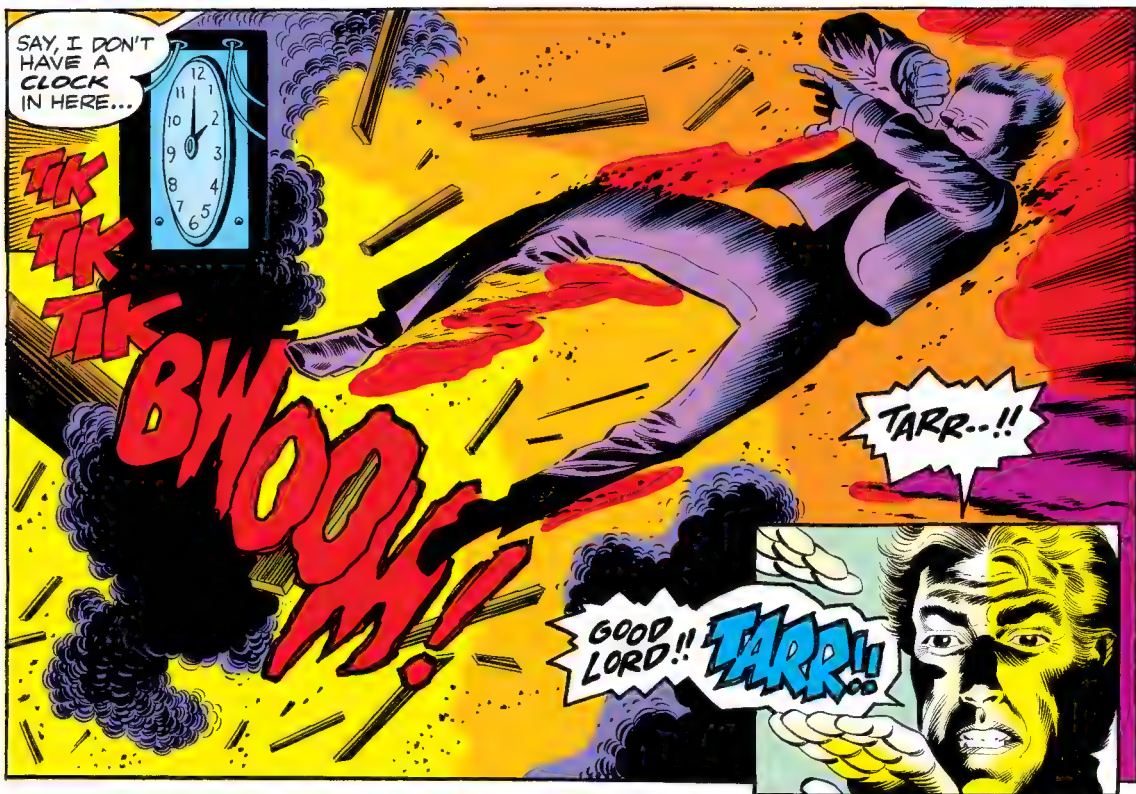
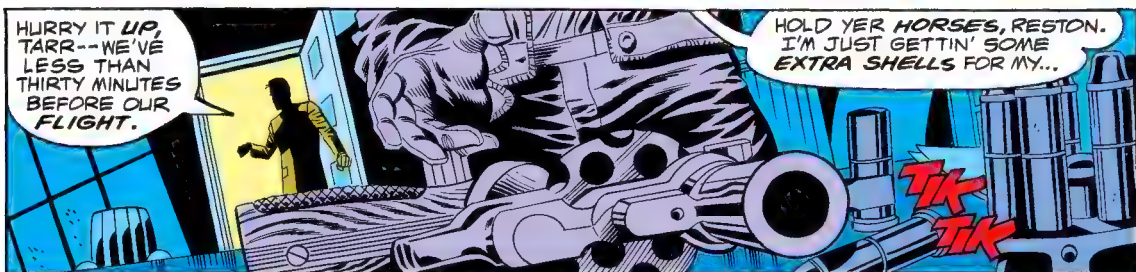
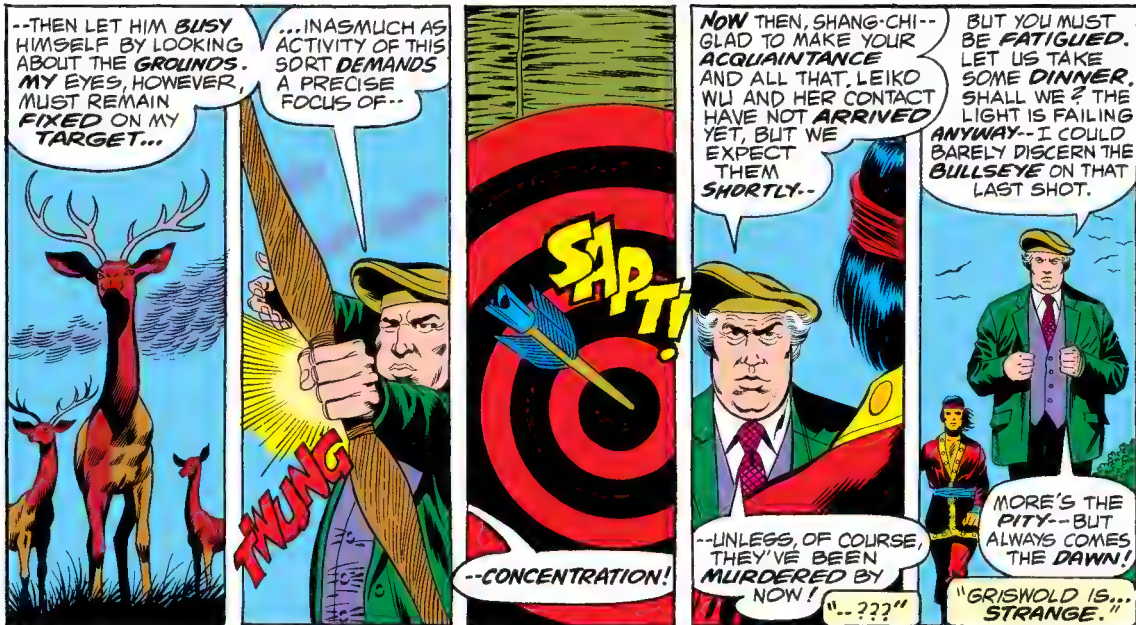


"YOU'RE AN EXPERT IN **DEMO-LITIONS**, LARNER..."









"THE BODYGUARDS, I THINK, DISQUIET ME THE MOST. DOES GRISWOLD GO THROUGH EVERY DAY OF HIS LIFE UNDER THE SHADOW OF THEIR PRESENCE AS THEY CONSTANTLY STAND NEARBY IN SILENCE, LIKE STATUES, PRETENDING NOT TO EXIST?"

--NOT THE MOST UNOBTRUSIVE SAFE-HOUSE M-16 HAS EVER SELECTED, SO THEY SHOULD HAVE NO TROUBLE FINDING IT!

I IMAGINE YOU'VE SEEN THE STAGS-- QUITE MAJESTIC CREATURES, REALLY, EVEN IF THEY DO HAVE A DISCONCERTING HABIT OF UPROOTING THE RUTABAGA...

BUT AS I WAS SAYING, THIS LEIKO AND HER CONTACT-- "AGENT-D," I BELIEVE-- REALLY SHOULD HAVE ARRIVED BY NOW.

"BUT THEY ARE NOT STATUES--THEY ARE MEN WHO GUARD GRISWOLD FROM DEATH, BUT WHO ACT AS IF THEY ARE THEMSELVES DEAD."

"WHAT DOES GRISWOLD EXPECT TO HAPPEN TO HIM--HERE?"

...SO I THINK WE MAY JUDICIOUSLY CONCLUDE IN ALL PRACTICALITY--

--THAT BOTH LEIKO AND HER CONTACT MAY VERY WELL BE--

--DEAD...

UHHN!!

"--!!"

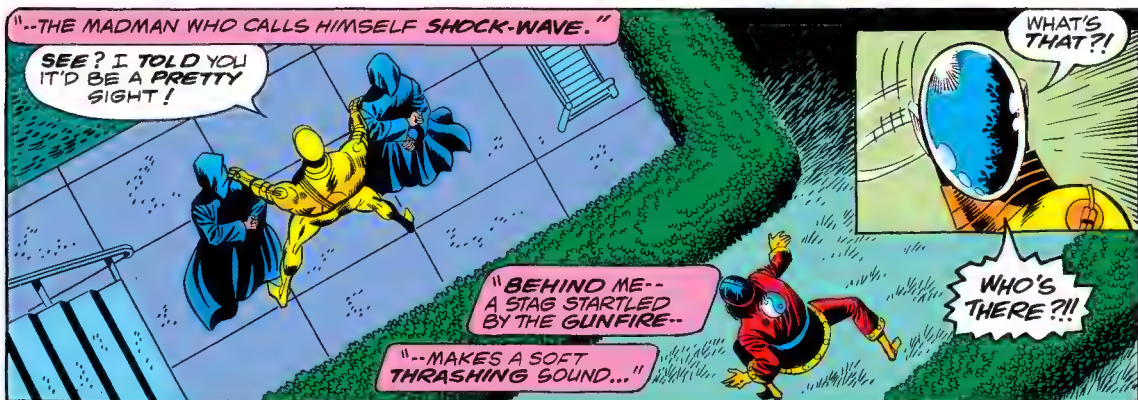
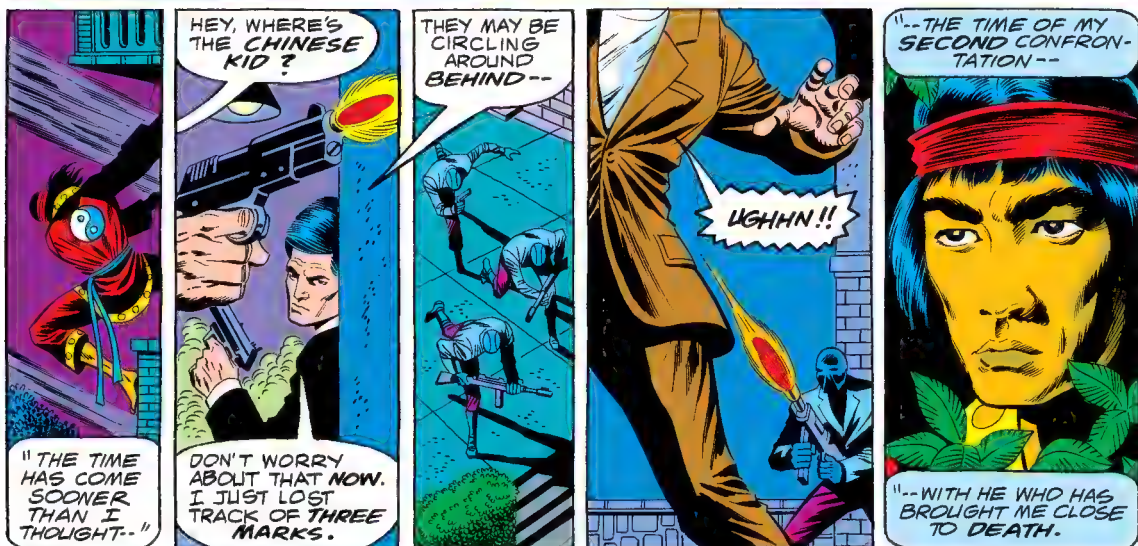
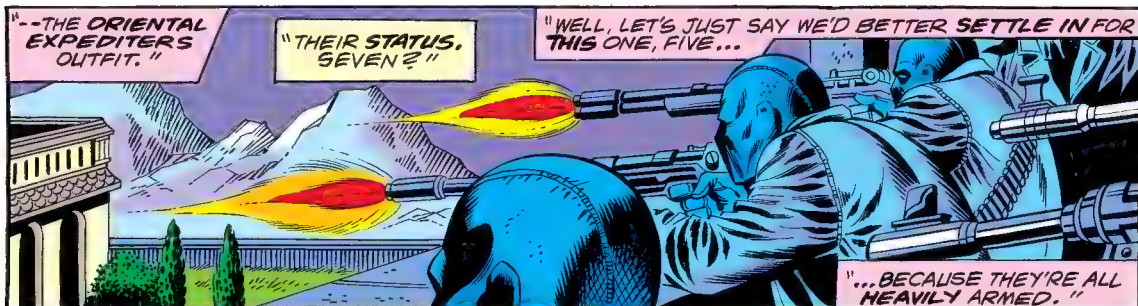
GET DOWN--FLAT!! GRISWOLD'S BEEN HIT!!

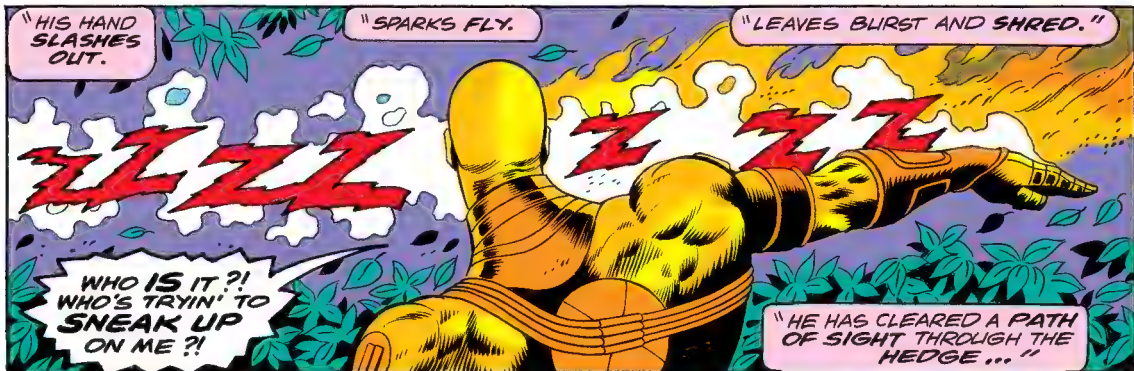
BOOM

I THINK WE'RE ALL AWARE OF THE FACT, NINE. CAN YOU SEE WHO MADE THE MARK?

NOT FROM HERE. HOW ABOUT YOU, SEVEN?

YES, NINE. I CAN SEE THE BUGGERS FROM THIS ANGLE. IT'S EXACTLY AS GRISWOLD SUSPECTED-- A TASK-FORCE FROM--





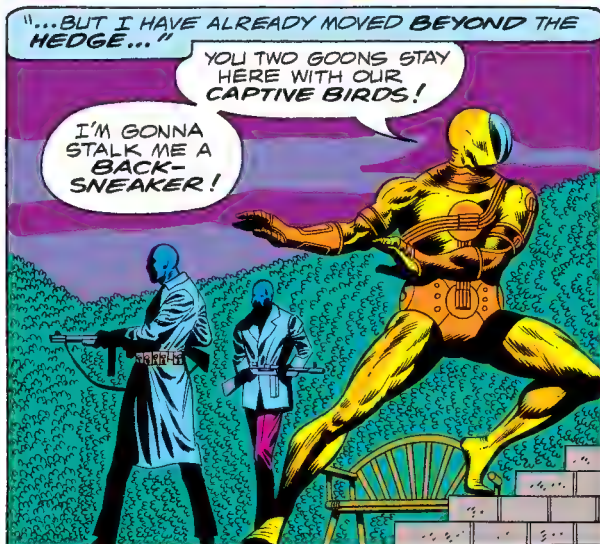
"HIS HAND SLASHES OUT."

"SPARKS FLY."

"LEAVES BURST AND SHRED."

WHO IS IT?!
WHO'S TRYIN' TO
SNEAK UP
ON ME?!

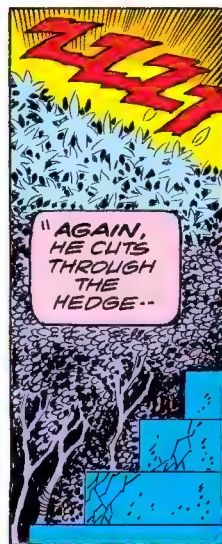
"HE HAS CLEARED A PATH
OF SIGHT THROUGH THE
HEDGE..."



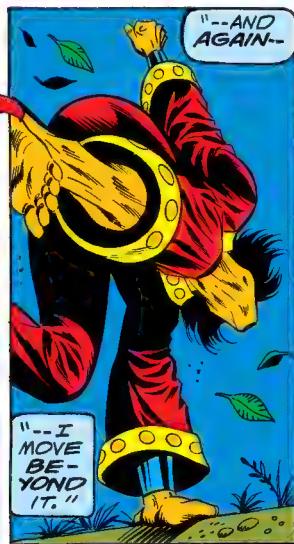
"...BUT I HAVE ALREADY MOVED BEYOND THE
HEDGE..."

YOU TWO GOONS STAY
HERE WITH OUR
CAPTIVE BIRDS!

I'M GONNA
STALK ME A
BACK-
SNEAKER!

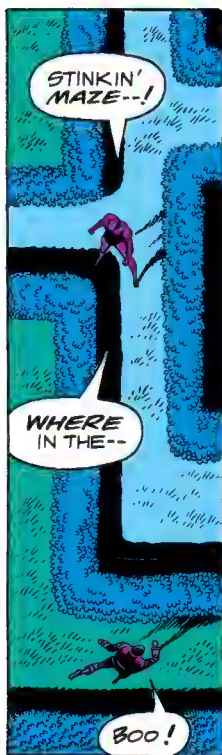


"AGAIN,
HE CUTS
THROUGH
THE
HEDGE..."



"--AND
AGAIN--"

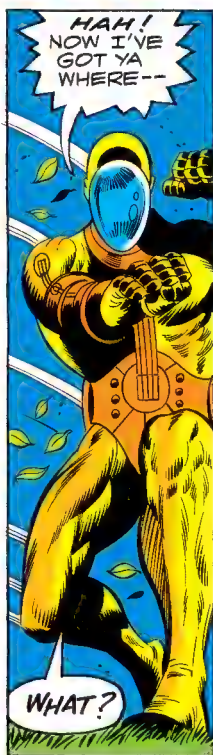
"--I
MOVE
BE-
YOND
IT..."



STINKIN'
MAZE--!

WHERE
IN THE--

BOO!



HAH!
NOW I'VE
GOT YA
WHERE--

WHAT?

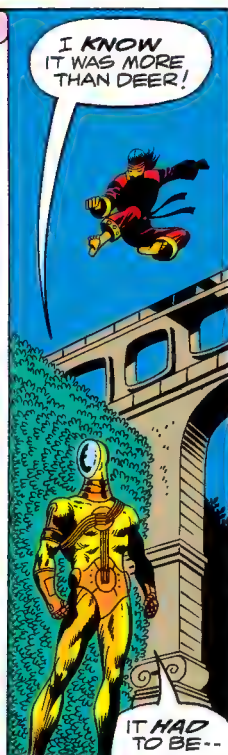


DEER-?!

NOTHIN' BUT
A BUNCH OF
LOUSY
DEER?!!

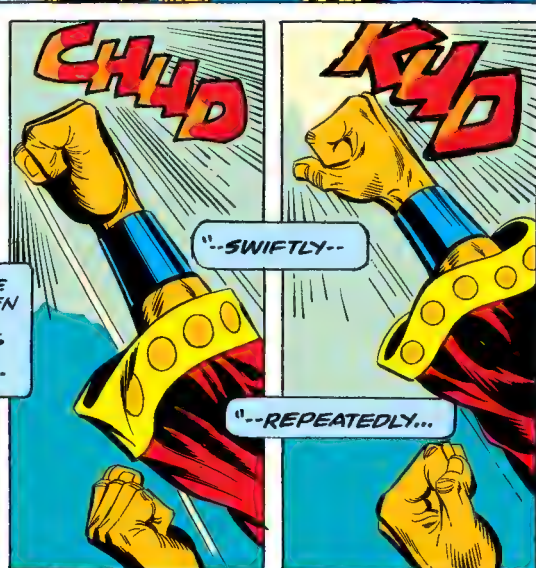
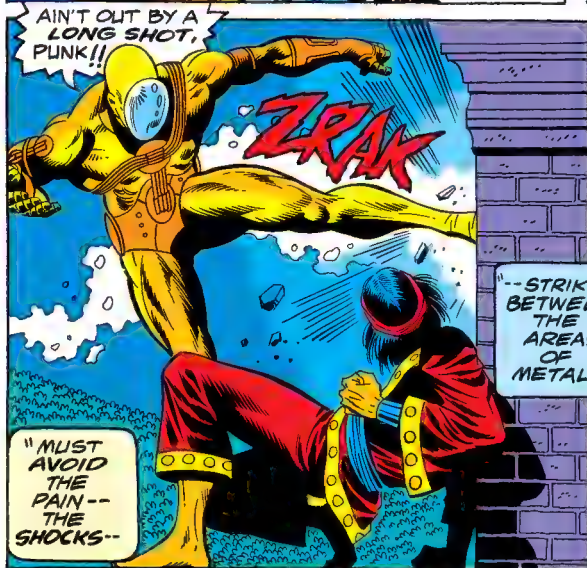


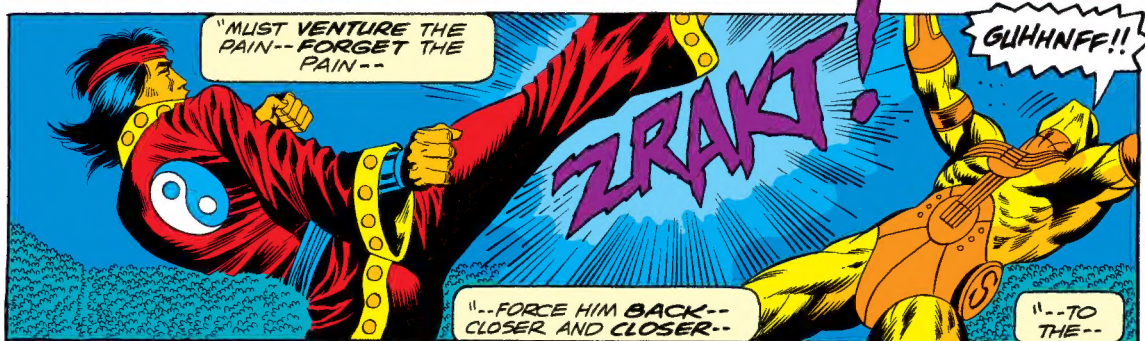
"HE IS WRONG."

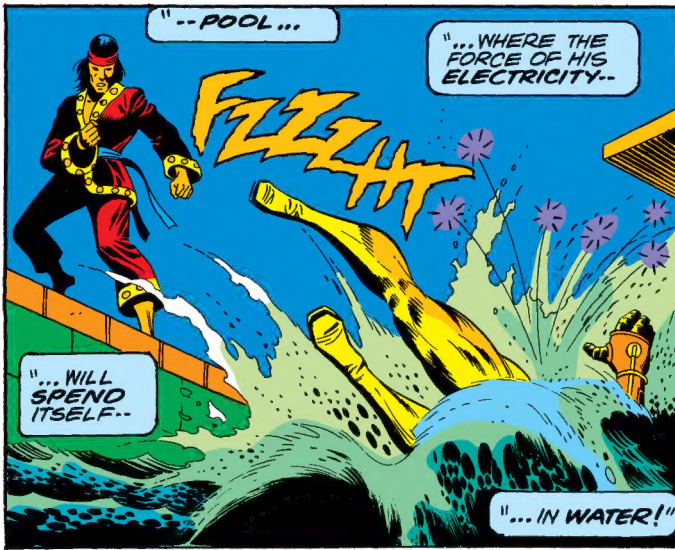


I KNOW
IT WAS MORE
THAN DEER!

IT HAD
TO BE--







"--POOL..."

"...WHERE THE
FORCE OF HIS
ELECTRICITY--

"...WILL
SPEND
ITSELF--

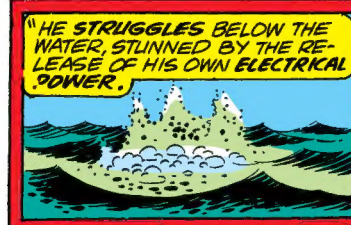
"...IN WATER!"



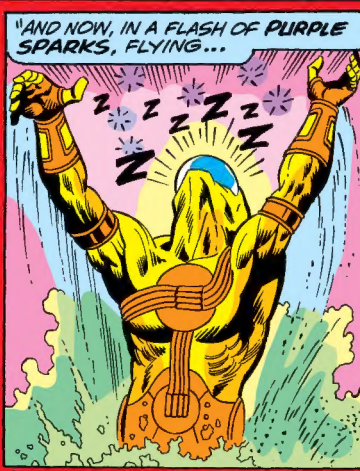
COME ON! LET'S GET
OUT OF HERE --
THEY'VE GOT TOO
MUCH COVER UP
THERE AND THESE
SHRUBS AIN'T
STOPPIN' THEIR
FIRE!

WHAT ABOUT
THE TWO
PRISONERS?

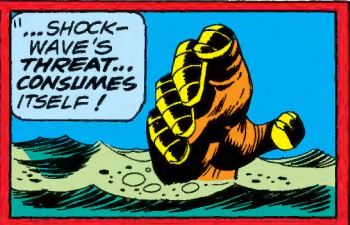
LEAVE 'EM!!



"HE STRUGGLES BELOW THE
WATER, STUNNED BY THE RE-
LEASE OF HIS OWN ELECTRICAL
POWER."



"AND NOW, IN A FLASH OF PURPLE
SPARKS, FLYING..."



"...SHOCK-
WAVE'S
THREAT...
CONSUMES
ITSELF!"



"I LIFT
HIS
HEAD
ABOVE
THE
WATER,
AND
FEEL
HIS
BREATH."

"SOMEONE
APPROACHES..."

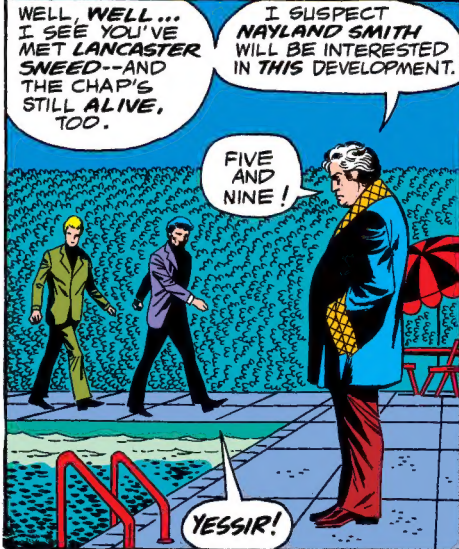
GRISWOLD...?



YES, YES, OF COURSE IT'S
ME. WHO DID YOU BLOODY WELL
EXPECT-- HUMPTY DUMPTY?

NOT
LIKELY...

"...SINCE
I'VE NEVER
SEEN AN
EGG
WEARING A
BULLET-
PROOF
VEST."



WELL, WELL...
I SEE YOU'VE
MET LANCASTER
SNEED--AND
THE CHAP'S
STILL ALIVE,
TOO.

I SUSPECT
NAYLAND SMITH
WILL BE INTERESTED
IN THIS DEVELOPMENT.

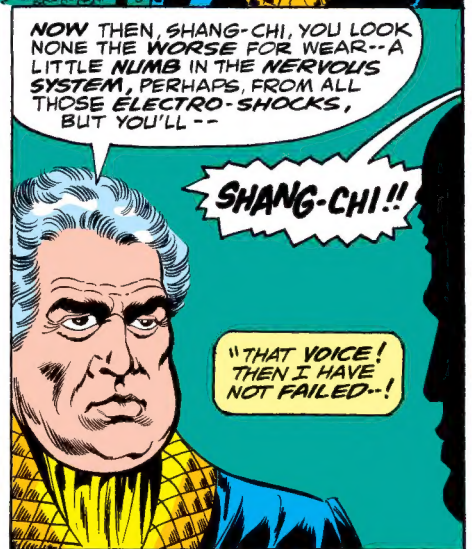
FIVE
AND
NINE!

YESSIR!



HAUL THIS
CARCASS
AWAY!

SHIP HIM
TO MI-16
IN
LONDON!



NOW THEN, SHANG-CHI, YOU LOOK
NONE THE WORSE FOR WEAR--A
LITTLE NUMB IN THE NERVOUS
SYSTEM, PERHAPS, FROM ALL
THOSE ELECTRO-SHOCKS,
BUT YOU'LL --

SHANG-CHI!!

"THAT VOICE!
THEN I HAVE
NOT FAILED--!"

"--FOR LEIKO STILL LIVES, HER EYES BRIGHT...THOUGH SOMEHOW SAD."

THANK YOU, SHANG-CHI...

...FOR BEING WELL.

WE FOUND THESE TWO IN THE SHRUBS, SIR HERBERT. SNEED'S ORIENTAL EXPEDITORS MEN MUST'VE FOLLOWED THEM HERE...

THAT'S PROBABLY HOW THEY FOUND US.

"SHE RUSHES FORWARD, HER SADNESS BREAKING..."

"...AND SHE FILLS MY ARMS, HER SCENT SWEET, MOUTH SOFTENED. I CANNOT STOP MY WORDS."

I HAVE GIVEN MUCH THOUGHT TO... LOVE, AND I AM GLAD YOU ARE WELL, LEIKO.

WE WILL TALK ON THIS, LATER!

YOUR COMPANION-- HE IS AGENT-D?

YES, SHANG-CHI, SHE IS AGENT-D. BUT YOU WILL KNOW HER BETTER BY HER REAL NAME...

"...DUCHARME."

"DUCHARME--?? SINCE MY EARLIEST MEMORIES, SHE HAS SERVED MY FATHER'S EVERY WHIM-- HER LOYALTY TO HIM REMAINING BLIND AND UNQUESTIONING!"

"AND NOW--TO LEARN THAT, IN TRUTH, SHE IS ONE OF SMITH'S AGENTS--!!"

DUCHARME...

BUT... YOU--

YES, SHANG-CHI, I AM DUCHARME... AND AFTER SERVING FU MANCHU FOR ALL THESE YEARS, THAT NAME IS MY ONLY POSSESSION.

YET, PERHAPS I AM FORTUNATE MERELY TO POSSESS MY LIFE... FOR YOUR FATHER DISCOVERED MY TRUE NATURE WHEN I OBTAINED MY LAST PIECE OF INFORMATION FOR NAYLAND SMITH.

...INFORMATION CONCERNING THE DEATH OF BLACK JACK TARR.

NEXT ISSUE!

BELIEVE IT OR NOT, PEOPLE, DOUG MOENCH AND PAUL GULACY HAVEN'T EVEN WARMED UP YET-- AND IN JUST THIRTY SHORT DAYS THEY'LL REALLY PULL OUT THE STOPS IN THE START OF THE MOST THRILLING AND STYLISHLY CRAFTED MAGNUM OPUS EVER UNLEASHED IN THE HISTORY OF COMICS! BE HERE FOR--

PRELUDE: GOLDEN DAGGERS! (A DEATH-RUN!)

MISSIVES^{TO} THE MASTER!

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Cry nepotism and favoritism if you will, People, but we've just gotta open this letters page like so...

Hey, Doug and Paul,

The two "Cat" issues of SHANG-CHI are two of the most moving, beautiful, lyrical comics to appear this year. They have grace, style, and—most of all—class. I am moved by the enchantment you have created, and I am bewitched by your insight.

Now...would you guys please tell me how you manage to do such a beautiful book on a *monthly* deadline—?!

Because, besides enchanting and bewitching me, you are beginning to make me feel *very* insecure.

Doug and Paul, both of you—and your book—are beautiful.

Don McGregor
(address frenetic)

Doug and Paul reply: "Hey, Don! It was a tough fight, pal, but you finally managed to say your piece. Thanks—and since you've been slinging the word "beautiful" all over the place, we might as well slap it on a target of our own...a strip by the name o' KILLRAVEN. (And tell Craig we *mean* it!)"

Dear Doug and Paul:

I'm rarely moved to comment on art except for specific complaints, but I have to say that issues #38-40 have been lovely, exciting, and incredibly precise. Shang-Chi's ponytail, the flowing transitions and stop-action layouts, the variety of facial expressions—very nice.

And I'm extremely glad that the subject of comradeship and friendship between Shang-Chi and Black Jack was developed. This not only gives context to *all* of their interactions, including nicknames, but also sheds light on the growing complexities among *all* the characters, complexities which are becoming very intriguing. Leiko Wu is probably the most human and complex Asian woman ever portrayed in comics (and not only that, but she has a great surname). Gradually, Doug, you've achieved a tremendous depth within this strip which gives it a character far beyond the action and plot of individual episodes.

One thought has occurred to me, spurred by the red bodysuit Shang-Chi wore for such a short time during the final two installments of the Mordillo trilogy. Actually, his regular outfit has always been an anomaly, since it approximates a karate gi. For a "master of kung fu," one would expect a costume at least roughly modeled on the type of attire actually worn by kung fu practitioners; that red bodysuit was considerably closer.

And in the meantime, I await the Doctor. . .

Bill Wu
101 N. Ingalls #8
Ann Arbor, MI 48104

Again, Bill, Doug and Paul are on your side concerning the red bodysuit versus the gi "pajamas." (After all, Paul *designed* the bodysuit.) However, editorial policy and commercial mandates ("don't-mess-with-success") dictate that the more familiar—and, by now, popularized—pajamas-gi is here to stay...with occasional and appropriate changes to suit specific missions and/or radical climates. For example, a segment of the upcoming, six-part Fu Manchu magnum opus will occur in the Arctic, and we doubt that *anyone* would venture therein with bare feet and loose pajamas...

Dear Doug and Paul:

Just a short note to say "Thank you." It's truly a pleasure to read something as compelling as any one of the Moench/Gulacy collaborations on MASTER OF KUNG FU. The books

are smooth, sophisticated, and cinematic. Quite clearly, it appears to be a case of true dedication to creating something really fine. Well done, gentlemen. And keep up the excellent work.

Frank Lovece
947 Maple Drive No. 15
Morgantown, WV 26505

Dear Doug and Paul,

Wow! Can it truly be that less than a year has passed since the revitalization of MOKF? Since the Velcro trilogy, MOKF has regained the sense of growth I thought was lost with Steve Englehart's departure. At that time, I didn't consider Doug Moench to be a really top-quality writer. Since MOKF #29, though, Doug has been consistently blowing my mind, not only here in MOKF, but in DOC SAVAGE, WEREWOLF BY NIGHT, and—best of all—his superlative adaptation of Michael Moorcock's "Behold the Man" in UNKNOWN WORLDS.

"Fight Without Pity" in #39 was beautiful. The script was a perfectly realized example of what fine writing should be. The characters all lived and breathed and touched the mind. In short, it took me...totally.

And not a little of that "taking" owes to the art. The Gulacy/Adkins team is one of the best in comics. Like Doug's writing, the art flows, living and breathing, through the mind.

K.J. Robbins
1314 Cooper Street
Missoula, MT 59801

Dear Marvel (especially Doug and Paul),

MASTER OF KUNG FU #40: Not *quite* as good as #39. Still, good enough to make it the second-best book I've read this year. Thanks!

Mark R. Kausch
2125 North Ave. #5
Sacramento, CA 95838

Dear Flawless Ones,

MOKF #40 was unbelievably good, with the art getting better all the time. Frank Lovece was right; you've reached the point of comics-as-cinema.

The suspense this issue was so terrific that I couldn't wait until next month to find out the answers to the mysteries—so I unravelled them myself. Only Leiko can meet Agent-D (for Dead) because only Leiko knows that Larner's Jennifer is still alive. The enemy mole is Petrie; a Manchurian Candidate brainwashed during his sojourn with Dr. Fu. Of course, there are still more questions: Will Shang-Chi kill Petrie *again*? Who were the baddies after in Larner's apartment? Why would Fu Manchu use an obvious cover-name like "Oriental Expeditors"? Has Leiko won Shang-Chi's heart? Will scripts, plot, and art improve without limit? Can I persuade you to publish MOKF *twice* a month?

Ron Masters
Urbana, IL

A neat guess, Ron, on the identity of Agent-D—but wrong, as this issue's denouement reveals. However, Doug had indeed toyed with the very possibility you speculate, ultimately discarding it since it interfered with future plans for Larner. Therefore, Jennie is indeed dead, and Agent-D is indeed shockingly revealed as...well, maybe you'd better read the conclusion of this issue to find out.

NEXT ISSUE: "Prelude: Golden Daggers (A Death-Run)"—a story which Doug and Paul feel is their best effort since "Cat" and "Fight Without Pity"...as well as the ominous prelude to our much-heralded, and (we like to think) much-awaited, six-part Fu Manchu saga. Take it from us: You're gonna be knocked on your ears, People!

Be good...